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ABSTRACT

An outline to be considered at least every 20 years, this guide enables librarians and library planners to estimate their overall space needs, assess the adequacy of the existing square footage, and determine if a more detailed study is appropriate. This outline does not presume to offer a precise estimate of every type of library space, but concentrates on the following: (1) collection space; (2) user seating space; (3) staff work stations; (4) meeting room space; (5) special-use space; and (6) nonassignable/mechanical space. The outline adheres to traditional library planning methodology in which past experience relating population to library building size determines the facilities that are needed. However, a new planning process based on library service output measures introduced by the American Libraries Association should also be considered. A worksheet is included at the end of the document to help with the calculation of a library's projected overall space need. (16 references) (SD)

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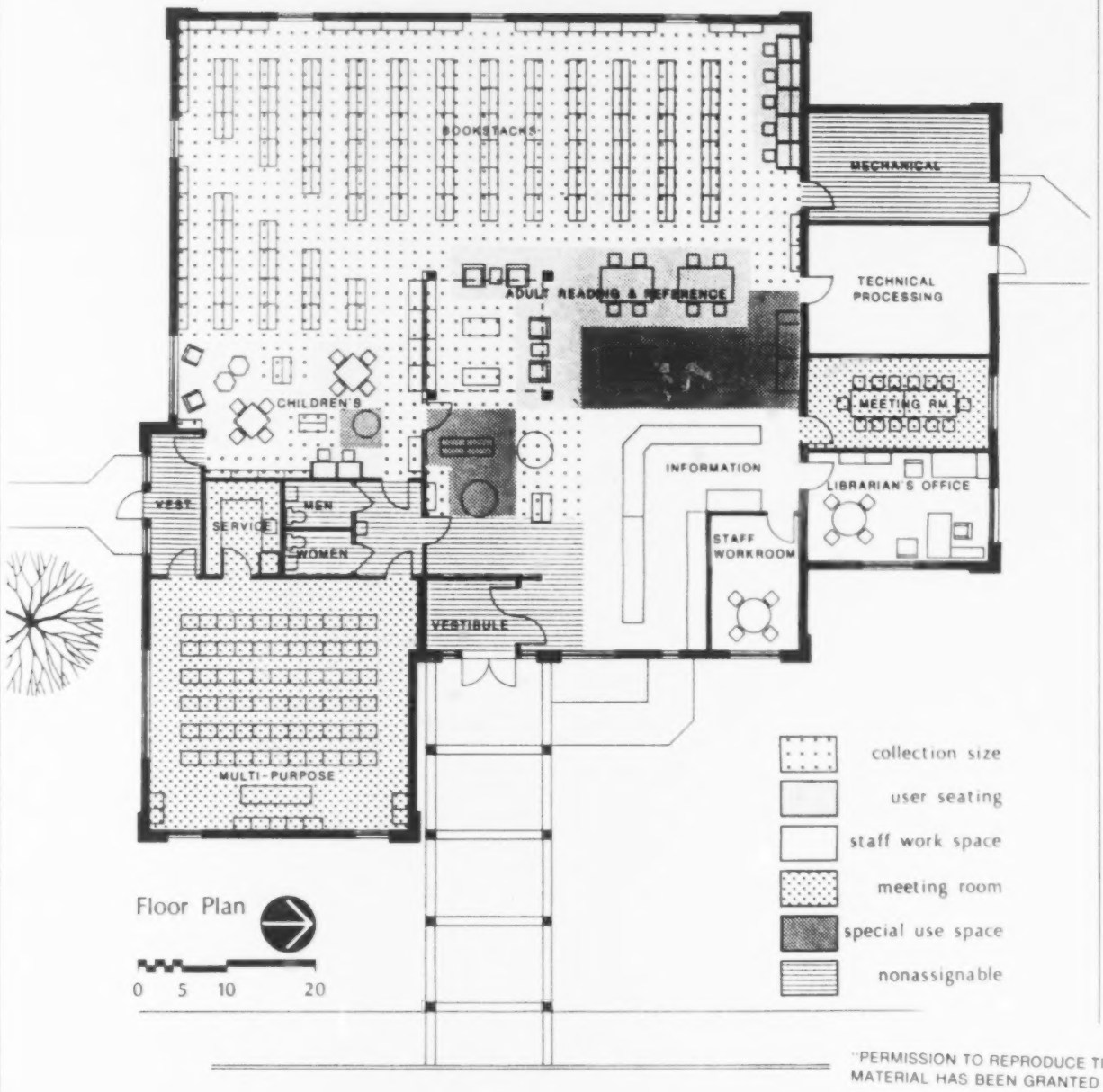
Library Space Planning Guide



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Library
Space Planning Guide

April 1986
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The following individuals served on the 1986 committee that generated the first edition of this document: Nolan Lushington, chair; Richard Krissinger; Edythe Landes; Joe Ruef; and Patricia Owens, State Library Representative.

For the second printing in April 1989, the document was revised by Mary Louise Jensen, Connecticut State Library Building Consultant, and Nolan Lushington, Building Consultant.

A Wisconsin State Library pamphlet served as the basis for much of the material. Excerpts were reprinted from *Public Library Space Needs: A Planning Outline*, by Anders Dahlgren, with permission from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 125 South Webster Street, Madison, WI 53703.

Connecticut State Library/Graphics Section 402

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Introduction

This outline is intended to initiate a larger facilities planning process. By completing this outline, librarians and trustees can quickly obtain a general estimate of their library's space needs. With that estimate, planners can assess the adequacy of the existing overall square footage and they can determine if a more detailed study would be appropriate.

This outline does not presume to offer a precise estimate of space needs. There are many detailed factors affecting space needs and service projections that are not addressed in this booklet. Only six broad types of library space are defined here:

- collection space
- user seating space
- staff work stations
- meeting room space
- special–use space
- non-assignable/mechanical space

Calculation of the needs in these broad types of space, however, quantifies the largest share by far of the overall projected space needs. A more detailed study would serve to refine the overall space needs assessment.

Library planners must also acknowledge that availability of space (or lack of it) is not the sole reason for examining physical facilities. Energy efficiency and condition of the heating, ventilating and air conditioning systems (ideal temperature and humidity for preserving materials are 65°–70° with 35–50% humidity), handicapped accessibility, adaptability to meet the electrical and telecommunications requirements of tomorrow's library technologies, and the assessment of the general effectiveness of work flow are all suitable reasons to examine the structure that houses your local library.

Basically, the planning outline adheres to the traditional library planning methodology in which past library experience relating population to library building size determines the facilities that are needed. However, a new planning process based on library service output measures recently introduced by the American Library Association should also be used in this process.

LIBRARY OUTPUT MEASURES are found in the paperback entitled *Output Measures for Public Libraries; A Manual for Standardized Procedures,* 2nd ed. (Chicago, American Library Association, 1987). *Planning for Excellence: A Checklist for Connecticut Public Libraries* (Hartford, Connecticut State Library, 1986) and *Planning and Role Setting for Public Libraries* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1987) are also helpful planning tools.

A **worksheet** is included at the end of this document to help with the calculation of a library's projected overall space need.

The schematic drawings used on the cover and on page 10 are reprinted with the permission of Schoenhardt Architects and the Prospect Library. The Prospect Library is a new building. The examples given in each step do not reflect this building.

Step–by–Step Planning

Step 1: Service Population

Effective library facilities planning begins with a projection of the service population 20 years hence. Since library buildings are an important capital investment for most communities, it is crucial that they be planned to respond to current *and future* needs. Projected service population is used to calculate several of the categories of library space that follow.

Estimates of the projected population can typically be obtained from your municipality, county, the regional planning commission, or from the State Office of Policy and Management. Local school districts may also be a valuable source for these projections; be aware, however, that school district service areas may not coincide with public library service areas.

Most public libraries also serve residents from beyond the boundaries of the municipality in which they are located (Connecticard). To ignore

the service implications or traffic generated by these individuals would result in a facility that would be outgrown too quickly.

One method of determining the nonresident service population is to calculate the ratio of nonresident transactions by a sample count and apply that ratio to the base population.

▷ Formula for projecting nonresident population to be served:

1. Divide nonresident circulation transactions by the total circulation transactions (this percentage equals the ratio of nonresident population to local population).
2. Multiply that percentage by the projected local population figure.

▷ Formula for projecting entire service population:

Add projected nonresident population figure to the projected local population figure.

Example:

The town has a population of 8,500. The total circulation transactions were 75,000 (7,500 were nonresident transactions and 67,500 were resident transactions.)

1. 7,500 nonresident transactions ÷ 75,000 resident and nonresident transactions ..... .10

2. Primary service population 8,500
   Nonresident population (8,500 x .10) 850

TOTAL SERVICE POPULATION ... 9,350

Step 2: Collection Space

Projecting Collection Space

By projecting the library's collection size, the space needed to house the collection can be quantified. It is most effective to make these projections over a 20-year period.

• Book collection

There are two methods for calculating book collection size:

1. For libraries that have undersized collections because of the lack of space, a minimum collection size can be projected on a per capita measurement. The chart in Appendix A, p. 12, can be a guide in determining minimum book collection size.

2. An alternate means of projecting collection size is to calculate the **average net additions** to the collection (volumes added minus volumes withdrawn equals net additions) and extend that rate of addition **over 20 years**.

• Audio recordings, audio cassettes, or compact discs

Likewise, project the size of this collection 20 years hence. The chart in Appendix A, p. 12, can be a guide in determining minimum needs.

• Periodicals

Again, project the size of this collection 20 years hence. The chart in Appendix A, p. 12, can be a guide in determining minimum periodical collection.

Calculating Collection Space

The number of volumes that can be stored in a given space can vary from 5 to 22 volumes per square foot, depending on several factors: the

height of the shelving, the width of the aisles, and the type of material (reference vs. children's books). A general average is 10 volumes per square foot.

- Formula for Books—To estimate the square feet of space needed to house the library book collection, divide the total projected collection by 10.
- Formula for Audio Recordings—To estimate the square feet of space needed to house the library collection of audio recordings in record bins, divide the total projected collection by 10.
- Formula for Videocassettes, Cassettes, Compact Discs—To estimate the square feet of space needed to house these collections, divide the total projected collection by 15.
- Formula for Periodicals—To determine the square feet of space needed to house periodicals, use the following formulas:
  - Take the *current* issues of periodicals housed on display type shelving, and divide the number of titles displayed by 1.5.
  - For *back* periodicals, multiply the number of titles of back periodicals by 0.5, and then multiply that product by the average number of years to be retained.

Example: (service population—9,350)

	square feet
30,000 volumes ÷ 10	3,000
1,000 recordings ÷ 10	100
300 videocassettes ÷ 15	20
90 current periodicals ÷ 1.5	60
70 back periodicals x 0.5 x 5 years	175
TOTAL COLLECTION SPACE	3,355

LIBRARY OUTPUT MEASURE

As use intensifies, a larger collection will be needed. See Appendix A, p. 12, for additional books per capita.

WORK SPACE

Step 3: User Seating Space

It is recommended that libraries provide **5 user seats** for **every 1,000 people** in their projected service area. Libraries serving **less than 10,000 residents** should provide **7 to 10 seats** for every **1,000 residents**. This recommendation, however, only establishes a base or starting point for further consideration. This user seating does not include meeting room space.

For instance, if your library emphasizes current material and best sellers and encourages browsing use of the collection, fewer seats are needed and the projection should be adjusted downward. If your library emphasizes research material and encourages long-term use by students and scholars, additional seats may be needed and the projection should be adjusted upward.

Just as the specific space required to house the collection depends on the type of shelving used and the type of material stored there, so the exact amount of space needed for user seating will vary depending on the type of seating: for seating at tables, allow 25 square feet per seat; for seating at study carrels, allow 30 square feet; for seating in lounge chairs, allow 35 square feet, etc.

▷ Formula for Seating—To estimate the square feet of space needed to provide adequate user seating, multiply the number of projected seats by 30.

Example (service population—9,350):
75 user seats x 30 = 2250 sq. ft.

LIBRARY OUTPUT MEASURES

Library visits per capita — 6.0
In-library use per capita — 2.5
Reference Transactions per capita — .6

These are useful guides to intensity of activity. Libraries with substantial increases over these figures should provide more seating.

(CONT.)

(CONT.) The Connecticut State Library, The American Library Association, and Public Library Association endorse these measures for library use.

WORK SPACE

Step 4: Staff Work Stations

A new or expanded facility offers the opportunity to reorganize relationships among existing work stations and add new work stations to improve service to the community. To determine the appropriate number of service points and the appropriate staffing levels at each service point, evaluate present staff workloads and examine trends in service patterns (increasing reference use or young adult use, for instance). Examine each existing *and prospective* department or service area (circulation, technical services, reference, children's, etc.); determine if a service point is appropriate given present or anticipated workloads; if so, identify how many staff members are needed to meet the projected service need.

Note that this section refers to the number of staff *work stations*, not the number of individual employees or the number of Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) on the library payroll. Obviously, several different individuals can occupy a single work station at different times. Conversely, it may be desirable to provide two or more work stations for certain employees (a children's librarian, for instance, may work a public service desk part of the time *and* have a separate desk or office away from that desk).

By identifying work stations, one focuses on the tasks to be performed in a given area and the ways that these tasks relate to other library operations. An average space allocation is 150 square feet per work station. In practice, some will be larger, and others may be slightly smaller.

▷ Formula for Work Stations—To estimate the square feet of space needed for staff work stations, multiply the number of work stations by 150.

Example (service population—9,350):
# of workstations=10 (10 x 150=1500 sq. ft.)
(Four workstations at circulation/information [1 at check in/registration, 1 at check-
(CONT.)

out, 1 at book sorting, 1 at information] 2 in librarian's office [office and meeting table], 1 in staff room, 3 in technical services)

LIBRARY OUTPUT MEASURE

Greater intensity of use as measured by Reference Transactions per Capita of .6 or higher will require more staff space in the reference area.

Additional temporary staff or volunteers should be considered in estimating staff work space.

WORK SPACE

Step 5: Meeting Room Space

Most public libraries provide meeting rooms to accommodate library-sponsored programs and other community meetings. The number and size of meeting rooms should be determined by the library's anticipated programming activities and by the availability of similar rooms elsewhere in the community for use by other local groups.

There are two basic types of meeting room space: lecture hall or theater seating; and conference room seating. It is not unusual for libraries to provide both types of meeting space. Some libraries with extensive programming activities for children also provide a separate area or room in the children's department to accommodate those activities. Otherwise, children's programs would likely be scheduled in a general meeting room and would prevent other community groups from using the meeting room during certain times.

▷ Formula for Meeting Room Space—For seating in a lecture setting, multiply 10 square feet by the number of seats. For seating at a conference table, multiply 25 square feet by the number of seats. For seating in a children's program area, allow 10 square feet per seat.

Example (service population—9,350)

	square feet
Lecture hall: 60 seats x 10	600
Conference room: 10 seats x 25	250
Children's program area: 25 seats x 10	250
TOTAL MEETING ROOM SPACE...	1,100

LIBRARY OUTPUT MEASURE relevant to this requirement is: Program Attendance per capita – .20 (the mean).
Libraries with greater program attendance should consider additional seating.

WORK SPACE

Step 6: Special-Use Space

Special–use space provides space for elements of an individual library's program of service or special types of furnishings that haven't been accounted for in earlier sections of this outline.

Special–use space typically constitutes 7–10% of the overall or gross area in a public library building.

For example, the library may offer typewriters or microcomputers for public use. Each user station for public typewriters should allow 40 square feet; public access microcomputers will require more space—about 60 square feet—especially if printers and other peripherals are provided.

▷ Formulas for determining special–use space—

1. Add the allocation for the four preceding types of space and multiply that subtotal by 0.1.

2. The following list of representative furnishings and their representative space allocations in square feet could be used. This listing is by no means complete. As a space needs assessment is refined, this section should receive special attention.

	square feet
Small–group study rooms	25 per seat
Modular AV storage units	15 per unit
Card catalog (60-drawer, single face)	35
Card catalog (60-drawer, double face)	100
Atlas/dictionary stand	30
Microfilm/fiche reader	30
Microfilm cabinets	10 per unit
Index table	140
Map file	35
Vertical files	10 per unit
Staff lounge/break rm.	50, + 25 per seat
Paperback rack	35
Newspaper rack	25
Public access catalog terminal	30
Display case	50
Public access microcomputer	60
Photocopier	50
3' single face bookstack display	10
Cassette tape or record display	28
3' locking cabinet	12

Example of special–use space (service population—9,350)

	square feet
Step 2: Collection space	3,355
Step 3: User seating space	2,250
Step 4: Staff work stations	1,500
Step 5: Meeting room space	1,100
	8,205
8,205 square feet x 0.1	821 sq. ft.

Step 7: Non-Assignable Space

Non-assignable space is that portion of the building that cannot be applied directly toward library service. Some representative types of non-assignable space include: furnace rooms, janitor's closets, storage rooms, vestibules, corridors, stairwells, elevator shafts, and restrooms. Such space is necessary to support the operation of the building, but it cannot be used for providing library services.

Non-assignable space generally comprises between 20 and 30% of the overall or gross square footage of the finished building. A calculation in the next section, "Putting It All Together," will provide a space allocation for non-assignable space.

WORK SPACE

WORK SPACE

Step 8: Putting It All Together

The space needs estimates developed in Steps 1-6 of this outline can be added to derive a subtotal representing the assignable space needs.

▷ Formula for non-assignable space—
Add Steps 2 through 6, and divide by 4.

▷ Formula for overall space needs—
Add Steps 2 through 7.

Example:

Step 1:	Projected population	9,350
		square feet
Step 2:	Collection space	3,355
Step 3:	User seating space	2,250
Step 4:	Staff work stations	1,500
Step 5:	Meeting room space	1,100
Step 6:	Special–use space	821
	SUBTOTAL	9,026
Step 7:	Non-assignable space (Subtotal ÷ 4)	2,257
Step 8:	TOTAL PROJECTED SPACE NEEDS	11,283

WORK SPACE

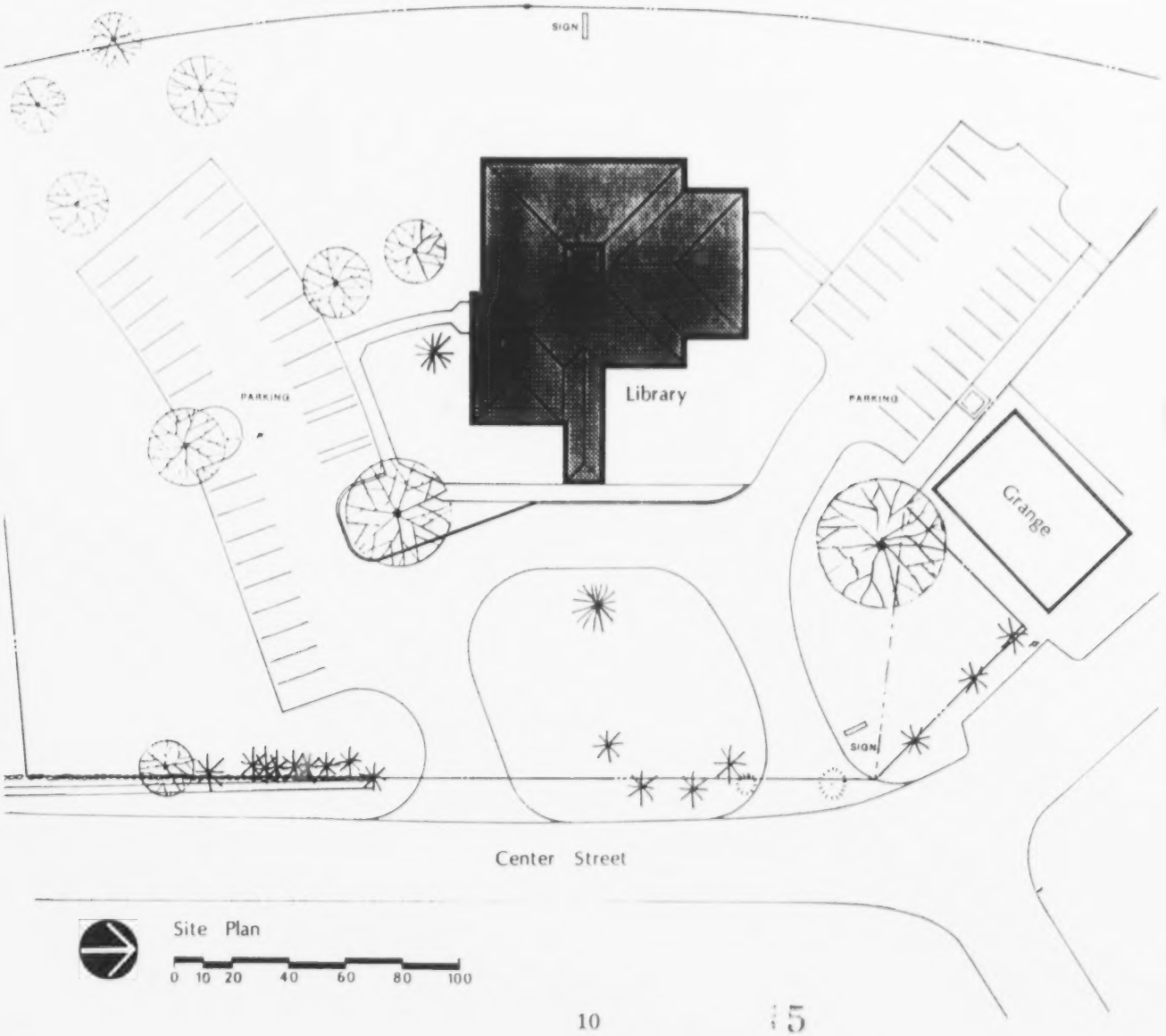
Step 9: Site and Parking

The ideal size of the site — Estimate the site as three times the ground area covered by the building. Approximately one-third (1/3) of the site will be needed for the structure itself; one-third (1/3) for parking, driveways, etc; and one-third (1/3) for landscaping, setbacks, amenities, etc. Very often this ideal site cannot be achieved because of restrictions to the site.

As a check on the site estimate, consider parking as a separate amount. As a rule of thumb, the total number of parking spaces will be one for each staff member plus one–half the number of adult seats in the building. Nearby curb parking and/or commercial parking may often be included. Note that local codes may impose parking requirements. Some codes require as much as 350 square feet of building area per parking space.

Next Steps:

If the facility and site prove feasible, then a thorough building program should be developed with a detailed program form completed for each functional area in the building (see page 13). It will result in a more refined statement of size and contents of the facility, and a more accurate cost estimate.



Conclusion

This outline should be completed from time to time, as changing estimates of your community's projected population and demographics warrant, but no less frequently than every five years. Once this outline is completed, library planners will have an estimate of your library's overall space needs. Comparison of this estimate with the existing facility may highlight a significant deficiency in the space your library provides.

If that proves to be the case, the library stands ready to embark upon a most important and exciting mission: a building program. Before writing the building program, there should be a closer examination of the space needs assessment. The space needs assessment can be refined through more narrow examination of the six broad types of space. This is done by

- Classifying the broad types of space discussed in the outline into more functional groups and arrangements.
- Identifying collections or service areas that were not specifically discussed in the context of the outline.
- Describing more specific environments and conditions in the library.

The primary roles and mission of the library will affect the size of the different collections. For example, if the main role of the public library is to be a popular library, then the library features current, high-demand, high-interest materials in a variety of formats for persons of all ages. This facility promotes browsing and has attractive displays and good signage with casual seating. However, if the main role is to be a preschoolers' door to learning, then the library encourages young children to develop an interest in reading and learning through services for children and for parents and children together. The facility is in a location easily accessible to young children. Ample, inviting space is available for programs and story hours. Shelving and furnishings are attractive, accessible, and comfortable for young children. The roles the library chooses will also affect the size of the collection, which in turn will affect the amount of square footage in that area.

The next step is to determine the number of volumes that will be in each of the following areas: adult nonfiction, adult reference, adult fiction, children's picture books, children's books. In determining the square footage for each area the following factors need to be taken into consideration:

- The height of a typical shelving unit and the number of shelves it can house;
- The length of a typical shelf and how much of each shelf should be used under ordinary circumstances—the "working capacity" of a shelf is only 66% to 80% of its actual length;
- The type of material being shelved (how many volumes can typically be shelved per linear foot of shelf space?); and
- The width of the aisles and the size of the base shelf. (Both factors help to determine the floor space that a representative shelving unit occupies.)

These factors will not be consistent in all parts of a collection. Children's material occupies lower shelves than does adult material. Reference books usually are housed with fewer volumes per linear foot of shelving than other types of material.

Library planners should also remember that, for various parts of the collection, there will always be a portion out in circulation. Completing the following chart will help to determine how full the shelves will be and how much seating should be allocated:

	Total Vols.	% in Circulation	Volumes in house
Adult nonfiction			
Adult reference			
Adult fiction			
Children's picture books			
Children's books			
TOTAL			

Other types of space can be subdivided as well: user seating space, staff work space, special-use space, and so on. At the end of this process, planners will have a space needs assessment organized around the library's functional areas.

With the preparation of a detailed space needs assessment, planners can start to evaluate the merits of different options available to them: new construction, expansion and addition, or adaptation of an existing structure. A building program statement is then prepared which summarizes space needs and the ways that expanded service areas should interrelate in a new or expanded facility.

Few projects are as complex and rewarding as a building program, and few offer such an opportunity to shape the community's library services for years to come. The Library Area form, on p. 14, should be completed for each section of the library, projecting the library's need for each section for 20 years. This form should be included in the building program. This form shows the activities performed in the area; the number of people who will be in the area at one time and throughout the day; architectural features, including notes about lighting levels, accessibility, and environmental controls; furnishings and equipment; interrelationships among departments; number of books, nonbooks, seats, etc. The architect will use a building program statement as a guide when developing plans for a library. The building program becomes a point of common reference between library planners and architect as they consider specific design options.

Your library system and the Division of Library Services can provide continued assistance with the facilities planning process. Planners can also benefit from a review of the literature on library design and construction. See Appendix B for a bibliography.

Appendix A: Quantity Measures

Sources:

Avenues to Excellence for Public Library Service in Illinois (Springfield: Illinois State Library, 1983, pp. 116–117.

Planning for Excellence: A Checklist for Connecticut Public Libraries (Hartford: Connecticut State Library, 1986), p. 59.

Population	Minimum level	Intermediate: Minimum level ↓ plus additional vols. per capita	Excellent: Minimum level ↓ plus additional vols. per capita
1. BOOKS–volumes			
Under 5,000	10,000	2.0	4.0
5,000–9,999	20,000	2.0	4.0
10,000–24,999	35,000	1.5	3.0
25,000–49,000	85,000	1.0	2.0
50,000–99,000	140,000	1.0	2.0
Over 100,000	250,000	0.75	1.5
		Minimum level ↓ plus additional titles per 1,000 population	**Minimum level ↓ plus additional titles per 1,000 population**
2a. CURRENT PERIODICALS–titles			
Under 5,000	40	5	10
5,000–9,999	90	5	10
10,000–24,999	150	2	8
25,000–49,999	280	2	8
50,000–99,999	560	1	5
Over 100,000	700	1	5
2b. In addition, the public library has ready access to an extensive back file collection through interlibrary loan.			
3. AUDIO RECORDINGS–titles			
Under 5,000	200	100	100
5,000–9,999	700	90	190
10,000–24,999	1,500	90	80
25,000–49,999	3,300	80	170
50,000–99,999	6,300	80	160
Over 100,000	9,200	70	150

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Van House, Nancy A., *et al. Output Measures for Public Libraries: A Manual of Standardized Procedures*. 2nd ed. Chicago: American Library Association, 1987.

Library Area (Circulation/Fiction/Children's/etc.) _____

Size (square feet) _____ Date _____

Activities

Occupancy (at one time) Public Staff Daily Uses

Architectural Features - Ambience

Furnishings and Equipment

Proximity Distance

Books Non-Book Materials

Total Seats: Table Carrel Lounge Staff

Space Needs Worksheet

Library/Town _____

Person completing form _____ Date _____

Step 1. Establish Service Population

a. Current local population (for comparison only) _____

b. Projected local population ..... _____

c. Projected nonresident population to be served: (nonresident circulation transactions _____)
+ (total circulation transactions _____) = _____
x (projected local population _____) ..... _____

d. Service population (b + c) ..... _____

Step 2A. Collection Size

a. Books— 1) Minimum volumes, as stated in the Appendix (p. 12), using the projected population served =_____; **or**
2) (Average net additions _____) x 20 years = _____
+ (existing collection _____) = _____
USE NUMBER: 1 or 2 ...

b. Audio recordings: 1) Minimum audio recordings, as stated in the Appendix (p. 12), using projected population served =_____; **or**
2) (Average net additions _____) x 20 years =_____
+ (existing collection _____) = _____
USE NUMBER: 1 or 2 ...

c. Video cassettes: (Average net additions _____) x 20 years = _____
+ (existing collection _____) = ... _____

d. Periodicals: 1) Minimum periodical titles on display, as stated in the Appendix (p. 12), using the projected population served =_____; **or**
2) Projected current periodicals on display ..... _____
3) Back periodical titles in storage ..... _____
USE NUMBER: 1 or 2 ...

Step 2B. Collection Space

a. Books: _____ volumes ..... (+ 10 = ... _____ sq. ft.)

b. Audio recordings: _____ items ..... (+ 10 = ... _____ sq. ft.)

c. Video cassettes: _____ items ..... (+ 15 = ... _____ sq. ft.)

d. Periodicals on display: _____ titles ..... (+ 1.5 = ... _____ sq. ft.)

e. Periodicals stored: _____ titles (x 0.5 x _____ average years retained = _____ sq. ft.)

f. TOTAL (a + b + c + d + e) = ... _____ **sq. ft.**

Step 3. User Seating Space

a. Number of seats for projected population under 10,000: 7–10 seats/each 1,000 people... _____
Number of seats for projected population over 10,000: 5 seats/each 1,000 people ..... _____

b. Space for seats: (_____ seats) x 30..... _____ **sq. ft.**

Step 4. Staff Work Space

a. List staff work stations:

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

b. (_____stations) x 150 ..... _____ **sq. ft.**

Step 5. Meeting Room Space

a. General meeting space _____ seats x 10 ... _____ sq.ft.

b. Conference room space _____seats x 25 ... _____ sq. ft.

c. Children's programming space _____seats x 10 ... _____ sq. ft.

d. TOTAL (a + b + c) ..... _____ **sq. ft.**

Step 6. Special–Use Space

a. Collection space (from Collection Space 2B.f.)..... _____ sq. ft.
User seating space (from 3.b.)..... _____ sq. ft.
Staff work space (from 4.b.) ..... _____ sq. ft.
Meeting room space (from 5.d.)..... _____ sq. ft.

b. SUBTOTAL 1 ..... _____ sq. ft.

c. Multiply (SUBTOTAL 1) by 0.1 ..... _____ **sq. ft.**
(An alternate method is to list specific types of special-use space and their representative space allocations, and enter the total in 6.c.)

Step 7. Non–Assignable Space

a. SUBTOTAL 1 (from 6.b.) ..... _____ sq.ft.

b. Special-Use space (from 6.c.) ..... _____ sq.ft.

c. SUBTOTAL 2 (a + b) ..... _____ sq.ft.

d. Divide (SUBTOTAL 2) by 4 ..... _____ **sq.ft.**

Step 8. Putting It All Together

a. Collection space (from Collection Space 2B.f.) ..... _____ sq. ft.

b. User seating space (from 3.b) ..... _____ sq. ft.

c. Staff work space (from 4. b.)..... _____ sq. ft.

d. Meeting room space (from 5 d.) ..... _____ sq. ft.

e. Special–Use space (from 6. c.) ..... _____ sq. ft.

f. Non–Assignable space (from 7.d.) ..... _____ sq. ft.

g. **GROSS AREA NEEDED** (a + b + c + d + e + f) ..... _____ **sq ft.**